

Kinderleben

A new approach to
teaching kindergarten

March 7th Newsletter

The meaning behind the name: At Gillingham we will no longer use the term kindergarten. The word kindergarten means child garden. It is a German word used by Freobel when he first established kindergartens. We are going to be using the term, still German, developed by an early childhood specialist, Dr. Jack Beckman. That term is *kinderleben*. It means child life. The reason for this switch in the use of terms is to indicate that at Gillingham we value the whole life of the child. Education then becomes about the whole person and who that whole person can become as he or she lives in relation with others, past, future and present and with things and places. Our goal at Gillingham is to see that children have a relationship with the whole of life not just what happens in a building. Therefore, because we don't believe we are "tending" children like tending a garden, but rather, we are helping children develop and grow for a *full life*. For these reasons we will use the term *kinderleben*.



In the Classroom:

This winter has been crazy! We have had a lot of snow days, morning delays, and late starts. Despite the weather we have done some pretty fun things in class! We are still focusing on rhyming words, and the beginning and end letters of a word. Some students have started working on spelling three letter words that follow a consonant vowel consonant (CVC) pattern. They do all of this learning through playing games. The students finished reading "They Were Strong and Good," and they created their own family tree artwork inspired by the book. They are learning about chickens through the book "A Chick Hatches." To help learn about where a chicken comes from we cracked open a normal egg and a hardboiled egg for the students to look at and discussed how a chicken develops inside an egg. Our class is also reading about Abraham Lincoln and we examined his face on the penny and five dollar bill. In math we are still focusing on counting by twos and fives, and have started to focus more on adding numbers by using an abacus and a whole/part chart. For picture study they created a collage based on Edward Hick's artwork. Check out the pictures above to see some of their work!

Things to come:

For the students last weaving project they will be creating a collaborative piece where they will be weaving different mediums onto a large loom. They will also be introduced to music by Johann Strauss II for their third composer this term.

Important News/Reminders:

- The students will be getting NEW HAND MADE cloth reading bags! Let's face it, the others are falling apart! They were made by Miss. Meza in 1st/2nd grade, the kinderleben aides, and myself. The students in class even helped sew the bags! They had a blast while doing it!
- Our January field trip to the Giant Grocery store had to be rescheduled and it is now Monday, March 10th. Students will be learning about the different food groups and what to eat to stay healthy.
- As the weather gets warmer we will be going outside more for recess and nature walks. Please make sure to continue to send your child in with gloves and a hat.
- The following are supplies that are needed in class:
 - Disinfectant wipes
 - Paper plates



News from the MAPS teachers:

Art: Have you ever noticed how spirals show show up all around us, especially in nature? Kinderleben students were read the book "*Swirl by Swirl: Spirals in Nature*". We saw spirals show up in plants, animal shells, and flowers. We saw how animals create spirals when they curl up to sleep. We practiced drawing our own spirals and created one large spiral and turned it into a snail shell. Our artwork was then painted with liquid watercolor. Students also had their first experience with chalk pastels and learned how use their two blender fingers to blend colors together.

Music: In music, we have continued our discovery of sounds and symbols in music. Students have been working on reading and pointing to quarter notes on the board. We have also recently begun to work on two sounds on a beat. We have continued differentiating between high and low sounds, fast and slow beats, and loud versus soft sounds. The students have also continued to cover multiple songs on the piano and some students have even moved to playing the white keys!

GYM: We have been working on a variety of games that implement the use of hand-eye coordination and throwing. We have also learned how to dribble, pass and shoot a basketball. Currently we are learning how to use a hula hoop in a variety of ways.

Spanish: We are learning Spanish through TPR (Total Physical Response) and internalizing our learning through action repetition. The language is internalized by acting not memorizing. We learned and often practice commands such as: *siéntate* (sit down); *párate* (stand up); *camina* (walk) *despacio/ rápido*(slow/fast); *pare* (stop); *de la vuelta* (turn around), *Pásame*(pass me), *dáme* (give me), *toquen* (touch), *vayan* (go), *señalen* (point to), *aplaudan* (applaud). We are still singing songs we learned throughout the year. We

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